

Georgia's Pre-K Program FAQ for Upcoming School Year 2023 - 2024

Pre-K Budget for 2023-2024

Is the budget for 2023 – 2024 final?

No, the Pre-K budget is not yet final. The Pre-K budget is part of the state budget for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. The proposed budget from Governor Kemp was discussed in the webinar on February 23, 2023. The budget is now going through the legislative process in the Georgia General Assembly. It will not be final until the Governor signs the budget into law. There may be changes made to the budget before it is finalized. DECAL will share the final budget once it is available.

What is the proposed salary increase for Georgia's Pre-K lead and assistant teachers?

An increase of \$2,000 is proposed for lead and assistant teacher base salary. In addition, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, providers will be required to pay all lead teachers 100% of the base salary.

Will payments for operating costs be prorated based on student enrollment?

A decision on per child proration of payments for classes with fewer than 20 students will be made after the Roster 1 data has been reviewed. Roster 1 will be due in September.

Note: The August and September payments for all providers will be based on the number of students on the Grant Agreement and verified lead teacher credentials in PANDA.

What is the proposed operating classroom increase for school year 2023 – 2024?

The ANNUAL classroom operating increase is \$3,676.16 per classroom. The amount is consistent across program type and zone.

Class Size Reduction Pilot

What is the class size for the 2023-2024 school year?

During school year 2023-2024, DECAL will be conducting a class size reduction pilot. Currently, the maximum class size for a Pre-K class is 22 students; the pilot will support

reducing class size to 20 students. Full payment for a class will be based on enrollment of 20 – 22 students.

- Continuation Classes: Full class enrollment will be considered 20 - 22 students for continuation classes.
- Expansion Classes: Expansion class(es) can serve a maximum of 20 students.
- New Classes: Newly funded classes can serve a maximum of 20 students.

How should programs determine class size for continuation classrooms for the 2023 – 2024 school year?

Continuation programs should have an enrollment of 20 – 21 students. Programs should determine continuation class size based on the needs of their program and families. Consider the following guidance when making your decision:

- If your current registration is 20 or less, you should plan to enroll up to 20 students.
- If you have one class with 22 students enrolled for next year, you should plan to serve all students and then reduce to 21 or 22 if a student(s) withdraws.
- If you have multiple classes, you should distribute students across classrooms to stabilize class size at 20 (or close to 20).
- If you have multiple classes, you may choose to apply for an expansion class to reduce class size to 20 due to current registration numbers.

Are programs required to submit a request to reduce the class size from 22 to 20?

It is not necessary to submit a request to reduce the class size to 20. Programs will “opt into” the class size reduction pilot when the 2023 - 2024 Pre-K application is submitted in PANDA.

If a program enrolls 22 students in a Pre-K class, will the class receive additional funding? If a program enrolls 20 students in a Pre-K class, will the class receive reduced funding?

No, enrollment of 20 – 22 students will be considered full enrollment for a continuation class for the 2023 – 2024 school year. No increase in funding will be paid for over 20 students. No decrease in funding will be paid for serving 21 or 20 students.

What is the class size for inclusion classes in the 2023-2024 school year?

The maximum class size will remain at 18 students per class.

Pre-K Application

I have multiple classes with full enrollment this school year. How do I apply for expansion classes for the 2023-2024 school year to reduce class sizes to 20?

Providers may apply for expansion classes through the 2023-2024 Pre-K application process. The Pre-K application will open on March 7th and close on March 30th. Instructions for requesting an expansion class are included in the PANDA Pre-K Application Manual posted at <https://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/PANDAResources.aspx>

My program has a waiting list of 18 students. Should I apply for an expansion classroom?

Programs with a waiting list and capacity for additional students should apply for an expansion classroom.

My program is having a class closed due to low enrollment and lack of a credentialed lead teacher during the 2022 - 2023 school year. However, I now have a lead teacher with an approved credential and additional children interested in attending my Pre-K program. What is the process for sharing this information with DECAL?

If you have been notified of a class closure and have information to share that would support continuation of the class, email prek@decal.ga.gov.